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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 NDJAMENA 000121

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TAGS: [CD](#) [KPKO](#) [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [SU](#) [SCRSERD](#)
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT DEBY BACKTRACKING ON UN FORCE IN EASTERN
CHAD

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CANCELTION - ZFR/ZFR THIS CABLE AS A NEW CABLE IS BEING SENT.

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to Annabi, Deby now claimed it was the international
community had
asked for a UN force in Chad * not the Government of Chad.
Deby
said the force he had in mind would only include civpols, not
a
military force. He feigned ignorance of the 9 December 2006
letter from the GoC to the UN requesting a multi-dimensional
UN
force for Chad. He reiterated that he had only agreed in
principle to a UN force, but he nevertheless remains willing
to
continue discussions on the matter.

Why The Backtracking?

15. (C) Annabi was not able to explain Deby,s retreat on the
positioning of a UN force in eastern Chad, other than to note
Deby,s pique over what he perceives as &unequal treatment8
by the
international community. Annabi described Deby as miffed
over the
attention the conflict in Darfur has received in comparison
with
Chad,s own plight. He seemed to feel that the UN Security
Council
has not taken seriously Chad,s complaints about attacks
coming
from Sudan.

16. (C) In discussions with Annabi and other diplomatic
representatives, several other reasons were posited for
Deby,s
reluctance on the UN force. For one, he perceives himself to
hold the upper hand now. His forces in the East are now
equipped
with armed helicopters and night vision capability, plus he
has a
solid stream of oil revenues. Deby is also prickly about
protecting Chad,s sovereignty, fears provoking Sudan or

Libya, and lacks an understanding of peacekeeping operations (PKO). Although the GoS has agreed to a UN force in Chad, Qaddafi,s opinion is still relevant for Deby. Also part of Deby,s strategy could be an attempt to get the UN Security Council to side with him in condemning Sudan and thus gaining its backing for his case that his problems originate entirely from his hostile neighbor.

Could The Diplomatic Community Help Change Deby,s Mind?

17. (C) Both during the general meeting with the diplomatic community (including representatives from France, China, the EU, and South Africa), and the follow-up meeting with the Ambassador, several ideas for making a UN force more acceptable to Deby were discussed. One was to deploy just a civpol force here without a military component. Annabi felt that was not realistic. The civpol had to have some kind of military protection. The only cases of which he was aware where civpols did not deploy with a UN military force were where there was some other military force deployed (such as NATO troops in Kosovo). Another proposal was to focus the PKO,s mandate on protecting refugees and IDP,s, rather than on dealing with cross-border movements. Annabi did not believe that this would get much traction with Deby, since Deby seemed unreceptive to the whole ideal of a PKO that included military elements.

18. (C) Also discussed were steps that the international community could take to persuade Deby. One was a joint demarche, either from UNSC member-states represented in Chad, or from a larger group of &friends of Chad8 to include the EU and Arab states represented here. Another was a visit to Chad by the UN

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Secretary

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General (which Annabi felt was unlikely) or by AU President Kufor. Perhaps the best starting point would be for the French and fellow African leaders to try to convince Deby at the Franco-African Summit next week. The French CDA agreed to raise this option with Paris.

Contacts with Chadian Rebel Groups

19. (C) During the TAM,s visit, the team met with the political opposition, but had no personal contact with rebel groups. However, in a telephone conversation, one rebel leader told a TAM member that they did not want a UN force, and would consider it as bolstering Deby,s position. However, the rebel leader made no threats. The TAM team expressed interest in pursuing contacts with Chadian rebel representatives, though it considered the matter less of a concern in view of the improvement in the security situation since its visit in November.

Comment

¶10. (C) ASG Annabi,s report is due to the Security Council
by 15
February. In our view, the quickest way to get to Deby on
this
issue would be at the Franco-African Summit. The other
measures
discussed in para 8 have merit and should be explored as well.
WALL